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Editorial: Creating Connections Between Inquiry and Education

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Editorial: Creating Connections Between Inquiry and Education

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Welcome to the first issue of Volume 9 of the *International Journal of Interpreter Education*. This issue offers a thought-provoking array of insights into the connection between research inquiry and interpreter education—which forms the very heart of this journal. IJIE’s inaugural editor Jemina Napier (2009), in her first editorial, wrote, “[Interpreter education research] provides us with the opportunity to compare educational outcomes with real-world expectations. It presents us with the challenge of identifying what else we need to know about interpreting in order to improve the education of interpreters” (p. 1). Certainly in the last couple of decades we have learnt a lot more about the interpreter’s role, for example, as an active participant in the co-construction of talk (e.g., Angelelli, 2004; Napier, 2007) and as a professional whose role inhabits different spaces depending on the demands and characteristics of different settings and interactions (Llewellyn-Jones & Lee, 2013). Contributions in this journal have explored innovative ways to bring new theory into the interpreting classroom (both face-to-face and online). Nonetheless, there is still much to learn about what interpreters do in interaction, and about how best to bring this to the classroom and connect theory to practice in a clear and useful way. Each of the contributions in this volume presents some suggestions.

Volume 9(1) is the first since IJIE became an open-access journal, meaning that all volumes, past and present, are now accessible without any subscription or membership. This change is an important step forward for the journal and its status, as it will not only create opportunities for sharing scholarship in wider circles, but also lead to more citations of our articles. Please share this news and encourage your colleagues and students to go to the CIT website² to see some of the fabulous resources that are now freely available.

Contributions to this issue come from the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand and Belgium. They tackle an array of topics, from social media to legal interpreting to a report on a recent symposium. All authors highlight the immense and practical value of making explicit links between research and education, demonstrating the ways educators can use those research findings to improve teaching or better engage interpreting students.

In the first research article in this issue, Brett Best explores the pervasive topic of social media, examining interpreters’ use of Facebook and Twitter. Best held focus groups with signed language interpreters from the U.S., U.K. and Denmark. Participants reported on specific strategies for managing their ‘professional’ selves within this domain. The study uncovered interesting findings in terms of what participants felt is and is not permissible to share on social media, particularly related to posting about events or pictures of themselves working at events on

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² <http://www.cit-asl.org/new/ijie/>

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Facebook. Interpreter use of social media has received attention in recent years, including at the 2013 InterpretAmerica Summit, as well as in the StreetLeverage post by Wing Butler (2012)—who advises interpreters to “pause before you post”. In our own experience, we see students generating questions, concerns, and ideas about how social media relates to their developing professional identities. Best’s article will help spark discussion in professional development and interpreting classrooms.

Our next two research articles focus more closely on the interpreting classroom, in particular, on assessment of student interpreting. Lydia Ding’s paper reports on two methods of interpreting quality assessment: the holistic method and the propositional analysis method. She describes the holistic method as a process for monitoring students’ overall performance and progress, although she notes that there is always potential for subjectivity. Propositional analysis is a micro analysis with a strong focus on accuracy at a propositional level. Ding discusses the merits of each assessment method as well as how they can be used in tandem, and offers examples to illustrate the process in action.

The contribution by Jo Anna Burn and Ineke Crezee also reflects the connection between assessment and instruction: Their paper reports on a small study which set out to expose student legal interpreters to naturalistic language used in the New Zealand courtroom environment by way of audiovisual practice. They provide a brief overview of question types used by lawyers during (cross-) examination and then an analysis of student renditions of these question types. The authors argue the benefits of exposing trainee students to such naturalistic language in what they call a ‘safe’ (classroom) environment, which educators can now better achieve thanks to the VoiceThread modality on the Blackboard Learning Management system (see Webb & Ehrlich, 2016, for a detailed discussion of ways to use VoiceThread in the online interpreting classroom). Not only are students removed from the actual high-consequence legal setting, but as they work with the texts in VoiceThread, students can pause audiovisual clips when they reach ‘tightrope’ situations (Gile, 2009, as cited in Heydon & Lai, 2015) where cognitive overload threatens.

The research articles are followed by open forum contributions. We begin with Lori Whynot’s reflection on the recent 2017 Symposium on Signed Language Interpretation and Translation Research (March 31–April 2, 2017), hosted by the Department of Interpretation and Translation at Gallaudet University and the Center for the Advancement of Interpreting and Translation Research. Practitioners and educators gained insights from presenters from the U.S. and Austria, Norway, China, the U.K., Hong Kong, Canada, Ghana, and Australia. Whynot offers an insightful summary of the overarching themes of this symposium, including details about interesting presentations and keynotes as well as the impact of these for the delegates from her perspective as a practitioner, researcher and educator. We are grateful to Lori Whynot for bringing a taste of the exciting programme to those of us who could not be there in person.

Next, in an interview, Debra Russell introduces Myriam Vermeerbergen, who joined the Editorial Board of IJIE in 2016. Vermeerbergen shares her interesting personal and professional journey, from an initial interest in signed languages to her role as coordinator of the interpreting programme at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium and her repute as a researcher in the fields of signed language and interpreting.

This issue also offers two reviews of recently published books, both more focused on signed language interpreting but nonetheless relevant also to spoken language interpreters and educators. Rachel McKee reviews a collection of papers from the first International Symposium on Signed Language Interpretation and Translation Research (that is, the forerunner to the symposium that Lori Whynot reflects on, also in this issue): *Signed Language Interpretation and Translation Research: Selected Papers from the First International Symposium*, edited by Brenda Nicodemus and Keith Cagle (2015). McKee describes the high calibre of studies selected for the volume, reflecting on this as evidence that signed language interpreting is becoming ‘a subject of graduate level study, which develops practitioners equipped for critical enquiry’ (p.67, this volume). She highlights the prevalence of ‘practisearchers’—those who create connections between inquiry and education by formulating research questions that are relevant to practitioners, based on their insider knowledge. She also notes the increasing connections between sign language interpreting and scholars in the field of T&I and sociolinguistics.

Rachel Mapson reviews Jemina Napier’s 2016 book *Linguistic Coping Strategies in Sign Language Interpreting*, based on her doctoral research published 15 years earlier. The research originally appeared at a time in which signed language interpreting research was starting to come into its own, and it focuses on two linguistic coping strategies in interpreting: translational styles and omissions. Mapson explains that the availability of Napier’s thesis is beneficial to interpreter educators and student interpreters in two ways. It provides a useful guide to different types of omissions and some of the underlying factors, and it also demonstrates that when

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students are made aware of issues relating to interpreter style in training, they can learn to strategically use style to best effect. Napier's work (a text we use with our own interpreting students in New Zealand) again strengthens the strong connection between inquiry and education.

The *International Journal of Interpreter Education* represents the voices of interpreter educators, interpreting practitioners and researchers from different countries around the world. We ask you to encourage your students to send in submissions for our Student Work section and to submit abstracts of completed dissertations (master's or PhD) so that we can revive the Dissertation Abstracts section in the next issue of the journal, and help disseminate new research relating to interpreter and translator education.

In addition to articles based on empirical research, we also welcome commentary and open forum submissions (book reviews, pedagogical ideas and observations, interviews, and reflections on relevant events such as conferences). For our next issue, we are particularly interested in submissions around the theme of situated learning—beyond the classroom. IJIE continues to be a platform for international scholars, practitioners, and educators to share insights about the connections between research and practice, inquiry and education, and critical reflection on these. In the words of well-known educator Paulo Freire (1998, p. 35):

There is no such thing as teaching without research and research without teaching.

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